Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

One of the first documents on information cooperation, adopted in the Commonwealth, was the Agreement on cooperation in the field of information (9 October 1992). It pointed out the need for a joint activity to ensure broader dissemination of all forms of information within the Commonwealth.

To insure information interaction between the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States the legal acts were adopted, regulating their mutual relations in exchanging scientific, technical, economic, legal information in the field of education, foreign economic activity, establishment of a common statistical data base, information cooperation in the field of environmental protection, book publishing, book dissemination and printing industry, periodicals, coordination of interstate relationships in the field of postal and electric communication, in developing the systems of cellular mobile communication.

With the aim of implementation of concrete tasks of formation of the CIS information space and facilitation of interstate information exchange, we have established the CIS Interstate Statistical Committee, the Interstate Coordinating Council on telecommunication networks development of the Commonwealth member states, Council of Heads of the state-owned information agencies of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Interstate Council on cooperation in the field of periodicals, book publishing, book dissemination and printing industry.

In order to fully and effectively meet the founding states' need for comprehensive and objective information on events and processes, taking place in the CIS countries, we have also established "Mir" Interstate TV and Radio Company.

Adoption by the CIS Council of Heads of Government (18 October 1996) of the Concept of information space formation in the Commonwealth of Independent States and of the Perspective plan of documents' preparation and measures for its implementation (1998) opened up a new stage.

Much work is being done to implement the Concept of the CIS information space, to assimilate the global approach to the legal governing of information exchanges, to master new information technologies.

By the present moment we have accumulated certain experience in establishing interstate telecommunication networks.

Efforts have been made to create the first line of the automated system of information exchange between the Commonwealth member states (ASIE CIS) and in its framework "CIS Documents" integrated data base has become the main information resource for the common use. Nowadays it contains the documents, adopted by the Commonwealth's supreme bodies, by the Eurasian Economic Community, by the Central-Asian Cooperation, by the Union of Russia and Belarus, as well as by some of the bilateral documents.

As part of the ASIE CIS, in the CIS was launched the establishment of a subsystem of legal information exchange, information exchange between the border troops and organs of the interior of the Commonwealth member states.

One of its most important parts is a legal information exchange subsystem, aimed at ensuring the CIS population's access to legal acts of the Commonwealth states and also to international instruments. To further this work we are now preparing a draft Interstate program for improvement and development of the ASIE CIS. The subject of the Program's adoption is supposed to be considered by the CIS Council of Heads of Governments in 2003.

As an example, one can refer to the Interstate program for the networks of information and marketing centers for delivering goods and services to the national markets of the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the period up till 2005.

The Program defines basic principal decisions and a package of measures for establishment and functioning of integrated network of information and marketing centers.

In the future the Program's implementation will allow the Commonwealth states to simplify and speed up the introduction into practice of trade and financial procedures, based on the use of new information technologies and digital communication devices.

At the Chishinau meeting the Commonwealth heads of states in October 2002 adopted a Decision on the Republic of Moldova's proposals regarding development of the Concept of the CIS information space formation.

Moldova has initiated the discussion on the issue on establishment of integrated register "CIS Population" and "CIS Legal Entities". Introduction of the proposed systems will enable to provide appropriate institutions of the Commonwealth countries and the CIS statutory and sectoral organs with the information the registers contain. This will also allow to create an interstate information and reference agencies, which will facilitate the formation of a common market of labor, the process of labor force migration, creation of conditions for electronic business, development of the interstate intellectual market.

To sum it up, one can say that in the Commonwealth a concerted policy of establishment of the information society infrastructure, including the sphere of electronic government, electronic trade, services, etc. is conducted.

It must be pointed out, that the CIS countries take an active part in preparation for and conduct of the World Summit on this vital problem. Like all the other global UN forums, this World meeting is sure to create a basis for international cooperation in the interest of both global information society and information and communication technologies at the national and regional levels.

In preparation for the World Meeting in the Commonwealth of Independent States the Bishkek-Moscow Conference on the information society issues was held.

The Conference resulted in two basic documents - the Declaration and the Resolution of the Bishkek-Moscow Conference of information society.

The said documents call for more active use of the CIS countries intellectual, scientific and technical, educational potential and at the same time they disapprove the use of information and communication technologies for the purposes, incompatible with the international stability and security.

The documents also outline that one of the main factors to determine the character of the ICT's use in the CIS countries is the peculiarity of the region with its huge distances, remote regions of low population density and a vivid difference in the states' economic development degree. They stipulate the need for preservation of cultural diversity of information society and also for protection of intellectual property.

The participants of the Bishkek-Moscow Conference addressed international organizations and investors with a proposal to cooperate in the ICT sphere in the region along the most important lines (TV-medicine and remote teaching, establishment of a network of points of collective access on a local level, use of high-frequency communication channels, insurance of access of the CIS population to world information resources).

The Commonwealth countries' proposals have been reflected in a final document of the Bucharest European Conference (7-9 November 2002) - the Bucharest Declaration.

The Commonwealth's activity, relating to preparation for the World Summit is going on. Apart from the CIS countries' participation in various forums, we have also been busy preparing joint decisions. At December 2002 meeting of the Coordinating council on the CIS countries' telecommunication networks development under the Regional Commonwealth in the field of communication, it was acknowledged, that it is necessary to further the rapprochement of the CIS countries' positions in preparation for the World Summit and to set up proposals for July meeting of the Council.

The CIS Executive Committee performs overall coordination of the CIS countries' process of preparation for the World Summit, in accordance with its commission, and hopes, that the outcome of today's forum will facilitate the creation of the basis for a new international cooperation in the interest of both the world information society and the ICT's development at the national and regional levels.